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Probable Portrait of James Pitzer Smith, San Francisco, ca. 1897–1900
Cabinet Card

Photo Notes – Cabinet Card Portrait

Jeffrey Hunt
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This cabinet card portrait is very likely James Pitzer Smith (1875–1936), the brother of Bertha Bright Smith (1879–1958). The photograph was taken at Duhem, "Sunbeam Photo," 64 Third Street, corner Mission, San Francisco, California, and is printed on a standard cabinet card mount measuring approximately 4 ¼ by 6 ½ inches.

The studio imprint helps to date the portrait to around 1895–1900, before the Duhem Brothers relocated to 94 Third Street in 1902. The card stock and embossed lettering are consistent with this period, and the sitter's apparent age in the mid-20s aligns closely with James Pitzer Smith's age at the time. On the reverse, the initials "BBS" are inscribed, most likely referring to Bertha Bright Smith, who is believed to have preserved the photograph.

This portrait comes from the collection of Barbara Toner-Hopper and was passed down through her daughter Elaine at the Applegate Cemetery funeral. A companion photograph by F. J. Meinzer of Cottage Grove, Oregon, shows the same man with Virginia Lee Miller (1882–1953), consistent with their marriage in 1904. Together, these images form part of a larger body of Smith and Wells family portraits documenting Oregon and California ties at the turn of the twentieth century.

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